FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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Since 1949 the purpose of Fellowship in Prayer is to promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice, and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

A Message From the President 2
Editor's Introduction 5
Meister Eckhart: Mystic of Deep Ecology, *by Matthew Fox* 6
Spirituality and Everyday Life: An Accident?, *by John Walchars* 10
An Interview With Ira Progoff, "Mystic and Modern" 13
"Is Art There?", *by Sandy Huffaker* 22
Prayers: Balm from the Twenty-third Psalm, *by Tom Jurek* 24
Spirituality in a Different Voice, *by Rosemary O'Brien* 25
What Happens When We Pray For Others?, *by John N. Gladstone* 30
At a Buddhist Retreat, *by Octavio Feliciano* 33
New Poetry 39
Poetry and Prayer, *by Bernetta Quinn* 40
Student Section: Giving Leads To Giving, *by Tara Grabowsky* 43
Letters to the Editor 47

Cover Drawing by Sandy Huffaker

Increasingly, world peace and the healing of Mother Earth have become linked in the minds of religious leaders as the two most important issues facing humanity today. Pope John Paul II has dedicated the church's next World Day of Peace to the ecological crisis, stressing that the goods of the earth must not be used "for selfish ends, for profit or power alone."

The Dalai Lama has written, "Despite systematic attempts in some parts of the world to destroy spiritual values, the vast majority of humanity continues to believe in one religion or another." This spiritual energy and power can be purposefully used, he went on to say, to bring about the spiritual conditions necessary for world peace and the healing of Mother Earth. Whether we will be able to achieve those goals or not, we have no choice but to work towards them, he added, saying "Religious leaders all over the world have a special role to play in this respect."

Fortunately, the world's political leaders are also beginning to realize the seriousness of the crises we face. The leaders (including President Bush) of the Group of Seven industrial democracies, meeting in Paris last July, dedicated a third of their final communique to an appeal for "decisive action" to understand and protect the earth's ecology.

Meanwhile, public support for greater environmental efforts, regardless of cost, has soared here at home. A recent New York Times poll shows that eighty percent of those interviewed agree with this statement: "Protecting the environment is so important that requirements and standards cannot be too high, and continuing environmental improvements must be made regardless of cost."

This awareness on the part of government and citizens alike is heartening. It is vital to remember, however, that with all that money, regulations, and technology can do, the healing of Mother Earth, as indicated by Pope John Paul II and the Dalai Lama, is very much a spiritual matter. What is needed is a sensitive and reverent understanding on the part of each one of us of our total interdependence on each other and on all of God's creation. As Father Matthew Fox says in his essay later in this

issue, "That is how Meister Eckhart saw the world when he said that 'What happens to another—be it a joy or a sorrow—happens to me.' This sense of shared cosmic interdependence is Eckhart's very meaning of *compassion*, our ability both to rejoice together and to heal and to make justice happen together. And when Eckhart says 'justice' he means justice to *all* the earth's creatures. For every one of them, after all, is a 'book about God' and God dwells in them all and they all dwell in God."

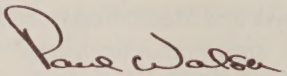
As the Vietnamese Zen master Thich Nhat Hahn says, we "inter-are" with each other, and what is done to any one of us—you, me, the elephant or the oak tree, is done to all of us. Nhat Hanh, whose writings have appeared in previous issues of this journal, is the founder of the movement known as "engaged Buddhism." Chairman of the Buddhist Peace Delegation to the Paris Peace talks, he was nominated by Martin Luther King, Jr., for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1967. He is also a member of the *Committee of Advisors* to Fellowship in Prayer's Worldwide Day of Prayer and Meditation to Help Heal Mother Earth (as are Dr. Joan Halifax, anthropologist, teacher, writer, and the founder of the Ojai Foundation and The Foundation School in California; the Reverend Joseph Williamson, Dean of the Princeton University Chapel; and Father Daniel Martin, Religious Advisor to the United Nations Environment Programme, director of the Wainwright Institute on Global Issues, and board member of the North American Conference on Religion and Ecology).

The importance of our realizing our total interdependence with Mother Earth as equal manifestations of the divine presence is strikingly illuminated by Thomas Berry in his new book, *The Dream of the Earth* (Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1988). Former president of the American Teilhard Association for the Human Future and presently director of a research center in New York, Father Berry tells us that "There is need for a great courtesy toward the earth."

"This courtesy," he says, "we might learn from the Iroquois. Their thanksgiving ritual is one of the most superb ceremonies that humans have ever known. Too long to present in its entirety, it does have a refrain that is relevant here: 'We return thanks'—first to our mother, the earth, which sustains us, then on to the rivers and streams, to the herbs, to the corn and beans and squashes, to bushes and trees, to the wind, to the moon and stars, to the sun, and finally to the Great Spirit who directs all things."

To experience the universe with such sensitivity and such gratitude! These are primary experiences of an awakening human consciousness. Such stupendous moments reveal a striking sense of the alluring earth. An intimacy wonderfully expressed in the famous Western Inscription of Chang Tsai, an eleventh-century administrative official in China. This inscription, placed on the west wall of his office, so that he would constantly have it before him, reads quite simply: "Heaven is my father and earth is my mother and even such a small creature as I finds an intimate place in its midst. That which extends throughout the universe, I regard as my body and that which directs the universe, I regard as my nature. All people are my brothers and sisters and all things are my companions."

The Dream of the Earth is a superb book and "must" reading for anyone concerned with helping heal our endangered planet. I urge you to read it.



Paul Walsh
President
Fellowship in Prayer, Inc.

Last Sunday, I had the opportunity to talk with Marjorie and Ashley Montagu, the brilliant author of *Touching, Growing Young, The Peace of the World* and over fifty other books. In every room of the Montagu's home all four walls are completely covered with books, while another ten thousand are stored in the cellar and attic. Mrs. Montagu joked that if one more book comes in, she is afraid the house will collapse.

In the course of the conversation I expressed concern about the overwhelming troubles confronting western civilization today and Dr. Montagu replied that he knew the "secret" to solving all the problems in the world! I asked him what the secret was and he answered: "Loving children."

That remark reminded me of a passage in *The Sun My Heart* by Thich Nhat Hanh, the Buddhist monk who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by Martin Luther King:

> I have a friend who is an artist. He has been away from home for nearly 40 years. He told me that everytime he misses his mother, all he has to do is look at his hand and he feels better. His mother, a traditional Vietnamese woman, could read only a few Chinese characters and has never studied Western philosophy or science. Before he left Vietnam, she held his hand and told him, "Whenever you miss me, look into your hand my child. You will see me immediately." How penetrating these simple, sincere words! For nearly 40 years, he has looked into his hand many times.
>
> The presence of his mother is not just genetic. Her spirit, her hopes, and her life are also present in him. I know that my friend practices meditation, but I do not know whether he has chosen as a subject, "Looking into your Hand." . . . This subject can take him far in his practice. From his hand, he can penetrate deeply into the reality of beginningless and endless time. He will be able to see that thousands of generations before him and thousands of generations after him are all he. From time immemorial until the present moment, his life has never been interrupted and his hand is still there, a beginningless and endless reality.

In celebration of the deep love that exists between the generations, this edition of *Fellowship in Prayer* contains an article by my daughter, Tara.

Mary Ford-Grabowsky
Editor

Meister Eckhart: Mystic of Deep Ecology

MATTHEW FOX

"Every single creature is full of God and is a book about God." These words of Meister Eckhart could have been written by Matthew Fox, whose love for God's creation has inspired women and men all over the world to cherish everything that is.

We bring you Fr. Fox's article in honor of our Worldwide Day of Prayer and Meditation to Help Heal Mother Earth, to be held in 1990.

The near-death of the Rhine river, the event of Chernobyl, the murder of the Black Forest—one wonders how the great Rhineland mystic, Meister Eckhart, would respond to these sins of contemporary human society. Eckhart (1260-1329)—called by Japanese Buddhist Dr. Suzuki the "greatest Zen thinker of the West"—, was condemned by his own church. But it is he who declared that "every single creature is full of God and is a book about God." This would mean that every drop of the Rhine river's water, every leaf in the Black Forest, every sheep poisoned by the Chernobyl fallout or every reindeer tainted by the same "is full of God and is a book about God." Eckhart would say that human folly in this late industrial era is contaminating Divinity itself. Crucifying the Divine all over again.

But the human soul too is divine and divinized—"the soul becomes divine though God does not become the soul"—and thus Eckhart would also conclude that the depths of the human psyche, our "souls," or what he calls "the innermost part of our being," is also tainted, wounded, aborted, by the suffering we inflict on mother earth, her waters, her forests, her four-legged and winged and finned creatures. For, if "all creatures are interdependent"—as Meister Eckhart said they were and modern science is saying they are—then the joy of one is the joy of all the

Matthew Fox is internationally known for his recovery of "Creation Spirituality," which combines Biblical creation traditions with medieval mysticism, native American wisdom and other religious streams. A Dominican priest with a Ph.D. in Spirituality from the Institut Catholique de Paris, *Fr. Fox founded and directs the Institute in Culture and Creation Spirituality at Holy Names College in Oakland, CA. Among his many books are the best-seller* On Becoming a Musical, Mystical Bear, The Coming of the Cosmic Christ, *and* Original Blessing: a Primer in Creation Spirituality. *To order* Creation *magazine, contact ICCS, Holy Names College, 3500 Mountain Blvd., Oakland, CA 94619*

others; and the pain of one is the pain of all the others. That is how Meister Eckhart saw the world when he said that "what happens to another—be it a joy or a sorrow—happens to me." This sense of shared cosmic interdependence is his very meaning of *compassion*, our ability both to rejoice together and to heal and make justice happen together. Spirituality for Meister Eckhart is not about trivial pieties or sacrene sentimentalisms—it is about celebration and justice, that is, compassion. "The person who understands what I say about justice," he writes, "understands everything I have to say." Eckhart does not fall into the Enlightenment trap of anthropocentrism and patriarchal arrogance toward the non-two-legged creatures of the universe. When he says "justice" he means justice toward *all* the earth creatures. For everyone of them, after all, is a "book about God" and God dwells in them all and they all dwell in God. This teaching of pan*en*theism*—often misconstrued by petty minds as the heresy known as pantheism*—constitutes the truly post-theistic way to image our relationship to Divinity, for in it is found a way to a healthy, ecstatic, grounded and justice-oriented mysticism. Only "ignorant people," he believes, "imagine that created things exist outside of God." We—all creatures—are in God and God is in us, like fish in the water and water in the fish. With this statement Eckhart supports Carl Jung's observation that one way to lose one's soul is to worship a God outside of oneself. Theism is dangerous to the soul. Panentheism is its antidote.

Eckhart celebrates the divine image, what is traditionally called cosmic wisdom or the Cosmic Christ, in all things. For "isness is God" and all things have isness. That is the basic "miracle," the non-elitest fact of the existence of something and not nothing. Contemporary science is also beginning to marvel, as Eckhart did in his day, at the fact that anything exists at all and that nineteen billion years of the creative work of the universe has birthed such wonders as the watery planet we call Earth and the amazing creatures from whales to earthworms to atoms to galaxies to sun and water with whom we humans share our existence and upon whom we depend for sustenance and survival itself. Eckhart praises this holy act called "isness" when he writes, "isness is so noble. No creature is so tiny that it lacks isness. If a caterpillar falls off a tree it climbs up a wall to preserve its isness. So noble is isness!" Eckhart compares God to

* *Panentheism means all things in God and God in all things. Pantheism means all things are God*—Ed.

Cliff Moore

a stone and to a fly because at the level of the divine gift of "isness" they are equal. Things are so sacred to Eckhart that he declares that were he to spend enough time with a caterpillar he would "never have to prepare a sermon." Because each caterpillar is so full of God and such a rich revelation of the Divine.

What Eckhart calls the "equality of being" would form the basis for an ethic in an era of deep ecology. For love can only be, he insists, where there is equality. We will never cherish Mother Earth if we cannot displace our feelings of arrogance and superiority *over* her with the truth of our equality *with* her and her children.

What we have in the amazing wisdom of Meister Eckhart is an invitation to reinvent our civilization not on the basis of duty or moral imperative but on the basis of shared awe, wonder or *reverence*. True reverence has nothing to do with pious obedience and nodding of heads—it is about being *awestruck* by the miracle of existence and the surprise that we—individual humans that we are—have been invited into this great, nineteen billion year, cosmic drama to play our own unique role for better or for worse. What is holding the human race back from this new—though ancient—ethic of reverence? Eckhart says that the problem is within ourselves and within the way we see the world. We need to *let go*, he insists, and *let be*. (His words are *abgescheidenheit* and *gellassenheit*.) We need to cease projecting and cease clinging and cease controlling. We

need to relax and to celebrate more and to succumb to compulsive work and addictive relationships and obsessive goal-orientation less. We need to "live without a why and work without a why and love without a why." In other words, we need to recover the sense of playing in the universe once again. A sense of divine eros.

This is not as hard as it sounds. "God is at home," Eckhart insists, "it is we who have gone out for a walk." To experience Divinity is to return home, to "sink," to "let go" continually to make touch again with that great "underground river" which is God that courses through all things, all humans, all hearts and that "can never be damned up and never be destroyed." Eckhart, unlike the patriarchal mystics, does not image our journey into the Godhead as climbing up a ladder but as spiraling through the cosmos with an ever-expanding soul, one that makes God joyful as it expands. He images the letting go process as sinking into our center, into the inexpressible, ineffable, unnameable darkness where all becomes one and God is "all in all." When we have managed to undergo our various letting go's and have developed our sense of sinking into God we are ready for the freest and fullest relationships with all things: We can truly love them and not be worked over by them, he says. We can be at home and with God whether alone or with others, whether at work or at rest, whether in church or in the forest. We can re-experience our joy and interdependence with all creatures.

Cliff Moore

An Accident?

JOHN WALCHARS

According to a popular saying, "A coincidence is God acting anonymously." The following true story shows—to people who have faith—that God's healing and transforming power works in unexpected places and unlikely situations at unpredictable times.

Is there any explanation to the frustrating "accidents" which affect our lives so adversely? Can there be anything "good" hidden in situations we casually classify as a "mess"? Could there not be a divine providence at work which escapes our fragile sense of detection? Didn't God say "My thoughts are not your thoughts, my ways not your ways" (Isaiah 55.8)?

Once, years ago, I experienced one of God's subtle contrivances in a manner which shall never be erased from my memory. It happened on my way to a meeting, on a very cold and wintry night in Boston. A heavy snowfall still in its fury made the icy sidewalk nearly impassable. It seemed that I was the only one in the whole world foolish enough to walk out in the treacherous weather. Suddenly, I sensed someone walking toward me in the darkness and recognized the figure of a man.

"Are you a priest?" he asked as he noticed my collar.

"Yes", I answered, "I am."

"You must be the priest I am looking for." His voice was filled with relief . . .

"You were looking for me in this miserable weather?" My surprise was genuine and obvious. "How could you know that I would be coming this way?"

He ignored my spontaneous reaction and repeated his words. "You are the priest I need!"

"Well then," I said, "What can I do for you?"

Fr. Walchars, a Jesuit who was born in Austria, writes that he has travelled far in his love affair with the Lord: to Beijing, Shanghai, Tokyo, New Zealand, England, Canada, and the U.S. The author of numerous books, he is a member of the American Society of Contemporary Writers and is cited in the International Who's Who of Authors and Writers.

"Nothing for me but perhaps for my friend."

His words confused me since he stood there alone. "Where is your friend?"

"He lives a few streets from here," replied the mysterious stranger. "A little while ago, he asked me to get my coat on and go down Chandler Street to find a priest. And here you are."

Knowing that my own appointment was within the hour, I spoke out with concern. "Does your friend expect to see me now?"

"No, but he hopes we can arrange to get together soon." He handed me a paper and pencil as he continued. "Please, Father, write down your name, address, and a time convenient for you."

The fact that the appointment could be arranged for the next day made me more comfortable. I quickly wrote down my name and added Holy Trinity Church, Shawmut Avenue, Tuesday—5 PM. The man reached for the paper, smiled slightly, and warned me to be careful. "This is a bad night to be out walking, Father, we'll see you tomorrow," he said as he disappeared in the darkness.

The next afternoon, a Jesuit friend invited me to join him for dinner at five o'clock. "Can we make it a little later?" I said. "I am expecting some guests." In my heart and mind, however, I doubted that the mystery men would really arrive.

I was wrong. At exactly five o'clock, two very tall men arrived at the door of the rectory, each of them impeccably dressed in a dark suit. "Do you remember me, Father?" asked the fellow who had stopped me in the snowstorm.

"How can I forget," I replied with a smile. "And this must be your friend. Please follow me into the parlor where we can talk alone." I ushered them into the room and led the way to a corner of chairs. Several minutes of silence passed before the troubled friend began speaking with his face buried in his hands.

"This moment has been a long time in coming," he said slowly. "I have wanted to talk to a priest so badly, but I had no idea how to arrange it. That is why I sent my friend out to look for one, and somehow, he found you."

He raised his head and continued in a low voice. "You must suspect, Father, that I am a criminal. All of my life has been spent making bundles of dirty money in a business so ugly that I can hardly think about it. There was only one person in the world that I loved dearly . . . my

Cliff Moore

mother. She was very proud of me . . . fortunately, she never knew the kind of son I was. When she became seriously ill several months ago, I knew she was dying. On her deathbed, the smile on her proud face made me feel very ashamed. It was then that I knelt down and promised God to change my life for the better. May I confess, Father?"

Solemnly, with a spirit of penitence, the man placed his sordid past before the mercy of God and let all the pain fall away. He did not relax until the story was finished. We talked for a while, no longer strangers, and then both of them got up to leave. I, on my part, remembered a famous saying: "Only through the grace of God was I not executed," and he on his part must have renewed the memory of the prodigal son.

It was with a sense of gratitude that I watched the two of them leave for their car. The penitent strode with the ecstatic pace of one relieved of a massive burden. Surely his mother's soul must have experienced delight since she had triumphed after all.

My thoughts flashed back to the cold evening on which the adventure had begun. The snowstorm, a veritable nuisance to all of my plans, became for God another "accident" in which He very carefully worked out a token of His miraculous mercy.

Can we ever understand?

An Interview With Ira Progoff, "Mystic and Modern"

Ira Progoff is best known as the founder of the Intensive Journal *method of personal development.* Intensive Journal *Workshops use contemplative writing exercises to deepen awareness of one's life and its connection to what Progoff calls the "larger-than-personal." Unlike diary writers who may succumb to endless self-analysis,* Intensive Journal *participants work at unfolding their inner "dynatype," the image of the person they are meant to become.*

FiP *Editor, Mary Ford-Grabowsky, met with Ira Progoff at his busy New York Headquarters, Dialogue House, and the following conversation took place.*

Q: Many of the traditional religions have lost or alienated many of their members. Why do you think this has happened?

A: Because these religions are not in keeping with the modern view. In my work I've been thinking of using the keynote "Mystic and Modern" because it seems to me that there are a number of aspects of my point of view that are modern. Actually, the key nowadays is to climb beyond the modern to the post-modern. And what the post-modern is is mystical.

Q: Do you think then that a new mythology is emerging, as Joseph Campbell suggested, that will replace the old religions?

A: Each person has to find it in themselves. There are some of us who find that when we go into our own depths, we touch something. And since it is in us, it is also in others.

Q: What is this "something"?

A: This feeling of connection that we have. I find that nowadays there

Ira Progoff wrote his doctoral dissertation on C. G. Jung and studied privately with him in Zurich. Later he headed Drew University's Institute for Research in Depth Psychology. Among his books are Jung's Psychology and Its Social Meaning, Depth Psychology and Modern Man, *and* The Practice of Process Meditation. *His 1975 book,* At a Journal Workshop, *won the Medical Self-Care Book Award for psychology. For information about an* Intensive Journal *Workshop in your area, contact Dialogue House, 80 E. 11th St., New York, NY 10003, (212) 673-5880.*

are certain persons who feel that they should just develop their individuality. Yet there are others—even those who have the feeling of individuality—who believe that you should not do harm to any living being.

Q: That's a very ethical position.

A: Yes, and that sense of something ethical is not a small thing. Because, really, it's the aftermath of love. I mean to say, we have the sense that we would want to treat others in a way that would be to their advantage, to do things in a way that would be good for other persons. We would not want to do something which would be harmful to another human being. That has to do with the sense of love. But it doesn't have the same feeling that makes love such a dynamic in the world. That's why I say it's like the aftermath of love.

Q: When people touch their depths in an *Intensive Journal* weekend, do they come into contact with this sense of love?

A: The goal of the *Journal* work is to make tangible what is essentially intangible in human beings' lives. The mystical aspect of a life is intangible. And the continuity of a life is intangible. But the *Journal* way is to make both tangible. When we make these aspects of life tangible, then we can have access to an interior kind of connection.

Q: So when you ask people to record their spiritual stepping stones in the *Journal*, is that when the connection becomes tangible?

A: Well, not everyone feels they have those spiritual stepping stones. My experience today is that there are a fair number of people in the culture who don't have a feeling of spirituality. In fact I apologize for using that word "spiritual." It has to do with what is "inner," with points in a life where one found an experience of connection to something that was larger than personal. That could happen if you are a physicist, let's say, and you are seeking the truth in nature. Perhaps there would be a moment in your life where there was a point of connection that made you understand somehow the way that things come together in the universe. Or if you are an artist, you might have an experience of color or form. At some point something large and impersonal broke into your experience. Or it could be an experience with nature. Or an experience in which one felt a meaning in life.

Q: You seem to be relating "the spiritual" to three things: connectedness, transcendence, and meaningfulness.

A: I would understand them as essentially the same, as one.

Q: I'd like to go to a different subject now. What is the significance of your idea of the "dynatype"?

A: What I've undertaken to do is to start with the concept that there is a seed, that there is a possibility in each person, and to take that seriously. The seed is present in each person and we must make it possible for that seed to grow, for each person to be a person. That is really the goal of a democracy. An important metaphor for me came from Thomas Gray's poem "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." That has been a very important one for me because I have taken seriously the idea, "Full many a flower was born to blush unseen, and waste its sweetness on the desert air." There is the person who is born and has the potential to be a creative person but just isn't, because of the social situation. They are not in a situation where their creativity can be evoked. And many people, I'm sure, get drawn into working in the wrong area, where the work is not congenial to the dynatype which is seeking to unfold itself in their life. Or there are difficulties that are placed in their life so that they never can unfold the dynatype.

Q: In the *Dynamics of Hope* you write about people "whose life goals extend beyond self-seeking," and you call them "Utopian Persons." They seem to be characterized by love.

A: There are persons whom I call "Utopian" because they have the sense that they have to be engaged in something that is a work for all people.

> Much as the acorn contains the whole oak tree, the unconscious seed within each person knows how to grow, knows the way it can solve the problem inherent in its life—Ira Progoff.

They have the feeling that they are going to make the world a better place for all people, and each one does that in their own way. Our culture tends to emphasize, though, that one should *not* be an "Utopian Person." One

should have as one's goal to make out for one's self, with the thought that if we work for ourselves then all things will come out well. There is a sense then that Utopia would be achieved if the person would work for their own individuality. I think a lot of that has to do with the way that Jung and Freud and the whole psychological era were focussed. The emphasis was on the development of the individual. And really, the sense of a democracy is that on the one hand we would want the development of the individual, yet the sense of love goes beyond individuality. Because love brings with it a sense that a person, the dynatype in a person, would unfold in ways that are not limited to the well-being of that individual.

Q: In the *Dynamics of Hope* you describe Gandhi and Schweitzer and other deceased people as "Utopian Persons." Are there any people living today in whom you see Utopian possibilities?

A: "Utopian Persons" would not necessarily be people who are famous. I just referred to the famous ones because they helped clarify the concept. Gandhi and Schweitzer believed that wherever there is life, there is a holy thing; that all things are holy. Especially Schweitzer, who was really more Buddhist than Christian. They both had a particular kind of thing they were going to achieve for others. It had to do with their own historical existence. That's particularly true in the case of Gandhi, and it's also true in its way for Schweitzer. That is to say, there was in Schweitzer more than one dynatype that could be unfolded. He could be a musicologist, a theologian, or a medical missionary. Each of these dynatypes is a particular image which could be unfolded, and each implies a particular work.

Q: There seems to be more than one dynatype unfolding in you, too. You could be placed in a lineage of religious thinkers like Kierkegaard, Buber and Tillich. Or you could be placed in the lineage of the mystics like Rabbi Akiba and Meister Eckhart. Or with depth psychologists like Freud and Jung. Or in a line of social transformers like Gandhi. Or would you like to be remembered as a prophet?

A: It's not for me to say. The truth is that I have a number of different lineages. When I was studying Gandhi I was also working on what is still an unpublished manuscript that has to do with the life of Moses. My idea is that the life of Moses is like the life of God. That we can speak of God in terms of God's having a particular life, a particular existence. On

the one hand, there is the concept of the Godhead as absolute, God with no historical form. And yet there are the particular expressions of the Godhead. In the Old Testament, for example, when God announces himself he says he is the God of Moses, and the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That's how he identifies himself, and I take it that that's a very particular form of God. There are two names for God. There is "I will be where I will be," and there is the name of God also in terms of historical lineage.

Q: Yahweh.

A: Yes. It comes in that particular form. I get the sense that there was in Moses as there was in Gandhi a sense of the absolute in God, the infinite—the existence of God beyond name.

Q: There was a Meister Eckhart in Moses, so to speak.

A: Right, that's the sense that I have. I interpreted Moses as having a great deal of Zen, which would be like Meister Eckhart as well.

Q: What do you mean, "Zen in Moses?"

A: What I see in Zen is it's activating an image that is seeking to unfold in a person. That is, a person stays in Zen in silence until they reach a certain depth. And then when they reach that depth, an image unfolds that is their particular image.

Let me go back to that question about my lineage. I met Suzuki when I was studying with Jung in Switzerland, and when I came back to New York, I was working on the Moses manuscript. That was in '54 or '55. For one reason or another we were subletting a very bare apartment; just a bed and nothing on the walls. I was meditating in a Zen way, sitting cross-legged on the floor, and something made me rise up and continue the meditation facing the blank wall like an old Jew at the wailing wall. I was continuing with the Zen meditation, but now I was at a wailing wall. That continued for awhile. So to answer your question about my lineage, it seems to me that it has to do with a combination of the East and the West. I consider myself a Jew, even though I don't practice the Jewish religion, and I would consider that the lineage comes down through Moses and Hasidism and through the mystical side of Judaism.

Q: All the way down to Martin Buber, I imagine.

A: Yes, I like Buber, Buber is very important to me.

Q: What in particular in his thought appeals to you?

A: The sense that there is a dialogue relationship between human beings. That is something that was not in Jung. There was a point where I had to make a choice: between Buber and Tillich on the one hand and Jung on the other. Jung was a person who was to sit in Switzerland as though Switzerland were the capital of the universe and stay there until others came. That was Jung's way. But Buber and Tillich, they were different. Buber and Tillich were outgoing, in the way of prophets. They were going to give the message.

Q: The I-Thou message. Jung absolutely did not have that.

A: Right. He did not have that.

Q: He never moved beyond his individualism to love and community. I think the other problem with Jung that would be corrected by the kinds of people we are talking about now—and by your own work—would be Jung's gnosticism. He takes people out of history up into the world of the archetypes, and you bring them back down! The *Intensive Journal*, for example, grounds people in the events of their lives and their outer "works."

A: It's the things you do in the world. I have the sense that Tillich was very much in favor of that. He had a great understanding of the feeling for Jung, but there is a lot of prophet in Tillich. The thing that Tillich was seeking was that one would go out to other people.

Q: As you speak, I'm beginning to think again about the subject of your lineage. It's *prophetic* Jewish mysticism.

A: Prophetic Jewish mystic? That includes a lot of the Christians as well. Recently, I've been working with the *Cloud of Unknowing* again. I now realize that its emphasis on the symbolism of the 14th century occurs because that monk [the Cloud Author—Ed.] lived in that time. The problem that modern persons have is that we're caught in a place where we can't feel the religious pattern that we are born into. Maybe that's not true for all of us. We feel we are connected to the religious and yet we are not.

Tom Dunham

Q: Polls show that a great number of people who call themselves Protestant, Catholic, Jewish or whatever are not practicing.

A: That's the thing. They're not practicing. There's a great deal of difference between feeling one's connection to a religious tradition and doing what the religion requires.

Q: I'd like to go to a different subject now. You write in the *Dynamics of Hope* that we alternate in our lives between an experience of hope and an experience of anxiety. You think everyone undergoes these cycles. What is striking is your relating hope and anxiety as opposites. Usually we think of hope as the opposite of despair, anxiety as the opposite of peace.

A: The heart of it is this. If you have hope for a particular thing, if you want a particular thing to happen, that's not so much hope as desire, and that desire leads to the fear that it won't be fulfilled. That's Buddhism and Lao Tzu and Taoism and that's Zen.

Q: This is "the anxiety of never." I'm never going to get it. It's never going to happen.

A: It happens that people who experience it that way have the experience that Buddhism describes, a desire or hope for a particular thing. It leads to a desire for a particular fulfillment, which leads to a fear that it will not happen.

Q: And this is where people get into acute anxiety.

A: Right. It seems to me that this is now on the one hand existential, it's in the nature of our lives. On the other hand there are persons whose experience is such that it makes them constantly think in terms of categories of "never." They think of their life in terms of particular goals and therefore they come to situations which will never be like the goal that they had.

Q: So they get stuck in the anxiety. I had the impression that a *Journal* weekend could help break through that and help the cycle move from the anxiety phase to the hope phase.

A: It does happen. People get the sense that the essence of hope is that it creates an atmosphere where one is in touch with a level of oneself and the aspect of one's life which is unfolding. And where one gets a sense

that there would be no particular thing that is necessary to hope for. But that the life is unfolding and that the process is right in oneself and that one is entitled to that process.

Q: When we say that someone is "paralyzed with anxiety," it might mean that the dynatype is not unfolding.

A: That's right. Because they have a particular goal that they want, they want a particular thing.

Q: That person would have to surrender.

A: Right. The first thing is giving up the thing that one desires. Giving up desire.

Q: When you write about "Utopian Persons," you say that they go through periods of very intense anxiety and find in that anxiety the image they need to keep going. Have you, as a "Utopian Person," had such an experience?

A: There was a time when I felt that nothing was going to work. Nothing was coming through. That was a good thirty years or more ago. It was a time when I had the sense that if things were going to come they would have come already. And that since they hadn't, they weren't going to. And then the experience came to me, a feeling like, "if not now, then later on; if not by me, then by someone else." It was in a sense of that which is "larger than personal." I had the sense of really giving up. I did nothing for awhile, maybe for a year or so, and then things started to come back.

Q: You've written about the number of people caught in the downward phase of the hope/anxiety cycle who encounter tremendous suffering and perhaps aren't able to believe that they are going to get back again to the upward phase, to the hope. What could you say to readers who might be in that place right now?

A: People who feel what you are describing are people who are part of that "never" syndrome, who feel they will never get what they want. They need to work to get a sense of that connection between what they are and what is seeking to unfold in their lives.

Q: Thank you!

"IS ART THERE?"
BY SANDY HUFFAKER

DO THE ARTS TODAY HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH **GOD, RIGHT/WRONG**, OR THE POSSIBILITY OF KNOWING **TRUTH**? PLAYWRIGHT ARTHUR MILLER HAS SAID THAT ART TODAY HAS TO DO WITH **'STYLE NOT CONTENT.'** COMPARE OUR FAMOUS WRITERS (UPDIKE, MAILER, TYLER, ETC.) AND OUR FAMOUS ARTISTS (WARHOL, JOHNS, LICHTENSTEIN, ETC.) — STYLE NOT CONTENT. MOVIES, PLAYS AND TELEVISION REMAIN A SPIRITUAL WASTELAND, EXCEPT FOR RARITIES LIKE PBS'S BILL MOYERS OR THE MOVIE FIELD OF DREAMS.

IT ALL REMINDS ME OF THE TELEPHONE REPARTEE AT MY FIRST ART DEPARTMENT JOB, BETWEEN MY FRIEND EARL AND A WITTY EDITOR:

EARL: "HELLO, ART DEPARTMENT?"
WITTY EDITOR: "IS ART THERE?"
EARL: "NO, HE'S **OUT TO LUNCH**!"

ART TODAY **IS** OUT TO LUNCH!

BUT THERE IS HOPE — PEOPLE ARE **SEARCHING**. HAVING JUST SEEN THE **GOYA** SHOW AT **THE MET** (WITH HEAVYWEIGHT THEMES LIKE: CHURCH HYPOCRISY, THE RICH AND THE POOR, THE EVILS OF WAR, ETC.), ONE HAD TO NOTICE THAT THE HUGE CROWD MOVED VERY SLOWLY AND WAS DEEPLY MOVED. THE SAME THING HAPPENED IN FRONT OF THE HIGHLY RELIGIOUS **REMBRANDT**. YET WHEN I ENTERED **TWENTIETH-CENTURY ART**, I WAS **ALONE**.

Balm from the Twenty-third Psalm

TOM JUREK

The Lord is My Time Giver
I Shall Not Want
In Short To-Do Lists and Prioritizing He Gives Me No Repose
Beside Less Caffeine and Lower Blood Pressure He leads Me
He Refreshes My Soul

He Guides Me Through An Honest Days Labor, Time for My Family
And Gives Me Enough Time Left Over to Be On a Few Church Committees
For His Names' Sake.

Even Though I Sit Through Seemingly Endless Meetings.
And Many Deadlines Approach—I Fear No Evil For
Friday is Just Around The Corner—And You Are At My Side
With Your Paydays and Holidays—That Give Me Courage
You Spread My Insurance Plan Before Me in the Sight of the Medical Profession
You Anoint My Head with Security and a Happy Family
My Cup Overflows

Only Completed Projects and Smiling Bosses Follow Me
All the Days of My Life
And I Shall Dwell in the House of the Lord—Someday
When I Show Up On His Daily Planner.

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If you, too, find *Fellowship in Prayer* "a joy and inspiration" to read, won't you take a moment to read and fill in the other side of this page?

Paul Walsh
President
Fellowship in Prayer

Spirituality in a Different Voice

ROSEMARY O'BRIEN

They put their hands on each other's foreheads, murmuring a few words—listen to me, I give you my blessing! A candle is lighted and in its wavering light they submit to their own thoughts, polishing them quietly; then they rise and, forming a circle, weave a pattern of harmonious movement.

This ritual, so rich in personal meaning for the women who take part in it, is about sacredness unfettered by patriarchy. Its roots reach back to mythic times when religion was created out of the mysteries of birth and death, a lost primitive world that worshipped the Goddess as a symbol of fertility and justice. A Darwinian view is that the nurturing mother phase slid into patriarchy as inevitably as buds become flowers, recycling into a more "rational" society. Some feminist theologians see it differently, speculating that since whatever is born will inevitably die, men unconsciously fear woman and her association with death. Hence, the emphasis in the Fall on Eve as the source of human mortality and the need to keep her sex under the control of a patriarchal deity.

Historically it would seem, therefore, that female power went underground, bursting forth periodically from its prison of inferiority only to be felled once more by male jealousy. The early Christian period, for instance, saw bands of respected women prophets and priestesses leading small communities of believers. Mary Magdalene was one of them, Elaine Pagels believes; she tried to steal a march on St. Peter to lead the Church. That failed, but women in the Middle Ages are said to have reenacted pagan rituals that nettled the clergy. The Inquisition uprooted them mercilessly. And as for the troubador, that warrior knight addicted to collecting gloves from his ladies, he was "ne plus amiable," a sign of female influence.

A downright bold rejection of masculine domination came in the 19th century with the women's movement. Their struggles provide the metaphysics for contemporary theologians of the anti-church persuasion. There was Madame Helena Blavatsky, leader of the Theosophical Society, which attracted such male chauvinists as Bernard Shaw, Yeats, and

Rosemary O'Brien is a Princeton freelance journalist. She is currently writing a chapter on Women's Spirituality for a Handbook for Women in the 1990s.

Oscar Wilde. These and other intellectuals toyed with the notion, so shocking to the religious establishment, that the discoveries of western science were compatible with eastern mysticism. They investigated the occult and held seances. Annie Besant, an agnostic separated from her uncomprehending clergyman husband, stepped into Madame's place and became the leader of T.S. in 1890. A Fabian lecturer and radical feminist, she died in India, a respected leader dedicated to the central insight of Buddhism that the eternal is present within each person.

Contemporary leadership in women's spirituality in America can look back with gratitude to forbears like Anne Hutchinson, a 17th century Englishwoman transplanted to Boston and banished from there to Rhode Island when "her religious convictions collided with authority of Massachusetts Puritans." A century later during the English Quaker revival, Ann Lee led a group of believers in celibacy to New Lebanon, N.Y. where they formed the first Shaker community. Ann Lee traveled around the area acting as a faith healer; preaching that God was both male and female because Adam, as a creature in God's image, possessed an androgynous nature.

Female religious leadership outside of orthodox institutions continued in the mid-19th century with Mary Baker Eddy. She discovered Christian Science after marrying her third husband. On reading Matthew 9.2 (Jesus said to the paralytic "get up, pick up your bed and go home") she was cured of an injury sustained in a fall. Afterwards she began to write extensively on the art of metaphysical healing, and in 1892 organized the first Christian Science Church in Boston.

A near contemporary of Mrs. Eddy was Susan Brownell Anthony, a feminist heroine who made her mark in politics rather than religion. A school teacher who organized the first woman's state temperance society, she went on to become an agent for the Anti-Slavery Society. Women's rights were her major preoccupation by 1854. She and Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton published the Revolution, a weekly paper with the motto "The true republic-men, their rights and nothing more; women, their rights and nothing less." She incurred arrest and a $100 dollar fine in 1872 for casting her vote in the Presidential election. Mrs. Stanton meanwhile composed *The Women's Bible*. Shorn of its patriarchal vocabulary it represents the first effort of its kind to translate the bible into inclusive language.

The revelations of psychology are, of course, pertinent elements of

Tom Dunham

modern spirituality, which is strongly represented in California. As the fine line between the body and the self has been erased, the search for spiritual and bodily harmony has taken on new and interesting forms.

The Holistic Health movement is composed of a variety of ways of seeking that harmony. A recent newspaper article listed the options available in one community as "yoga, acupuncture, macrobiotics, Gestalt, crystals, rolfing, holistic psychotherapy, biofeedback, transpersonal counseling, polarity, T'ai Chi, homeopathic medicine, and reiki . . ." Holistic health, the author concluded "is, above all, confusing." The appeal of this menu is that it offers something for everybody, providing they can put aside their doubts and dive down into their own egos to find the energy that holistic practitioners believe is there. The feminist contribution to this movement is based on a rejection, found in so much feminist literature, of (in Carol Christ's word) "the theological separation of humanity and nature." It further refuses to accept the dichotomy: men are rational, women irrational. One path to healing the separation is through ritual.

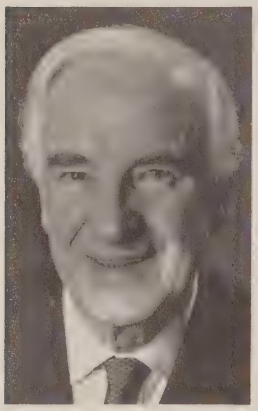
Ritual is a way to assert the primacy of feeling as against what many women have come to see is the destructive rationality that has led us to nuclear weapons and environmental pollution. Feminine rituals today do not attempt to propitiate the external gods, as their neolithic foremothers did, but to release internal energy for a particular purpose, such as group cohesion. "In ritual the thing desired is acted" the Cambridge classicist Jane Harrison wrote seventy years ago. "Creeds, doctrines, theology, and the like, are only part . . . of religion." She added, affirming that in primitive religion "ritual is dominant and imperative." In just two decades since the women's liberation movement began in the 1960's there has been immense growth in women's studies and in the scholarship that underpins the current theological stance. The model for a spirituality expressive of many women's lives is horizontal, not patterned after structure. For some of them the movement is religion, because it is about values. There is no attachment to patriarchy, with its teaching that women's bodies are not valuable.

It is interesting to note how many young college students view themselves in the light of redefining religion in terms of feminist awareness. Hazel Staats-Westover, United Church of Christ Chaplain at Princeton University, sees their concerns as both broader and deeper than one might expect. She mentions three major issues: equality, reproductive

rights, and sexual preference. Discrimination on campuses is by no means gone; negative images of women abound, often to the point of causing a loss of self esteem among female students. There is a spiritual component in these concerns, which is involved in the fundamental quest for "our own valuing of our potential as one half of the human race. The old scriptural values of the patriarchy have been wrong and modern women, by and large recognize this." Curiously, students are less attracted to rituals than young married women, or older ones nostalgic for, according to Mrs. Staats-Westover, "the nurturing experiences of the 1960's peace movement."

What Happens When We Pray for Others?

JOHN N. GLADSTONE



What happens when we pray for others? I answer, first: Something happens to us. Quite apart from any effect on those prayed for, there is an undoubted effect on those who pray. In the Book of Job, chapter 42 verse 10, there is an arresting statement: "The Lord restored the fortunes of Job, when he had prayed for his friends." Dr. A. T. Gossip gives us an actual illustration of that. A fine Christian woman told him that when she gave time to prayer the needs, sorrows, and circumstances of so many people known to her kept crowding in and demanding prayer that she had no time to ask for anything for herself. Then she added whimsically, "But God doesn't seem to mind, and keeps heaping upon me all for which I should have asked, and meant to ask, yet found no time to ask." We needn't doubt that. Unselfishness is its own reward.

But we go beyond that. Something happens in us!

Prayer for others has a transforming effect on the mind. It changes our attitude toward people and causes. It changes ill will and dislike into goodwill and friendship. It changes unholy envy into holy emulation. It changes proud indifference into personal interest. Are there people who irritate you or have injured you, people you even detest and tend to shun? Pray for them. Are there enemies or rivals you fear? Pray for them. You will become more loving, patient, understanding. Let prayer take the place of criticism, hostility, aloofness, and you will be a happier person, with a healthier mind, living in a larger, enriched world.

Prayer for others also has a dynamic effect on the will. It is true of all prayer that, divorced from positive action, it is a sham. It is a meaningless indulgence in misdirected piety. There is no use in praying for God's will and way if we are not prepared to be resolute and determined, to follow

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his light and leading when it comes. So if we pray for those dear to us, for our friends and enemies, it will constrain us to action. As we imagine their situation, hold them before God, we shall be moved to ask, "Lord, what will you have me to do? What action can I take to get these prayers answered? Is there an apology to make, a letter to write, a visit to pay, a service to do?" Anyone who prays fervently for his or her country will be a conscientious citizen, eager to play a part in the political process and to make a contribution to the national welfare. Anyone who prays sincerely for the Church, its spiritual and financial strength, its progress and outreach, will not remain an idle spectator. True prayer is dynamic, provoking us to play our part in achieving what we are praying for. Something happens in us when we pray for others, and in this sense the words of George Meredith are profoundly true: "Who rises from prayer a better man, the same is answered?"

An officer on wartime operation fired a question at his padre. "Why is it that sometimes when my nerves are on edge I begin to quiet down and become as calm and collected as if I were sitting at home in the living room?" The padre replied: "May it not be that somebody is praying for you?" "Of course!" the officer exclaimed, "my mother!" William Temple put it very simply: "When I pray for my friends coincidences happen to them. When I cease to pray, the coincidences cease."

What happens when we pray for others? I answer, in the second place: Something happens to others. To know that you are being prayed for is a heartening, fortifying assurance. Winifred Holtby, the novelist, came back from the Dedication Service of a girlhood friend who was going out to the mission field and wrote in her diary: "It must be wonderful to decide about the age of twelve to do something obviously worthwhile, to go and train for it, and then have about six hundred people gather with you to pray over you, and say that you are right." She could have added that it is even more wonderful to go out to a distant land and do your missionary work knowing all the time that you have the support of prayer partners at home. As a son, I have cherished the unfailing prayers of my parents. As a minister, I have found it always humbling and strengthening to hear myself prayed for in public.

But what of those who do not know others are praying for them? Does

something happen to them? An officer on wartime operation fired a question at his padre. "Why is it that sometimes when my nerves are on edge I begin to quiet down and become as calm and collected as if I were sitting at home in the living room?" The padre replied: "May it not be that somebody is praying for you?" "Of course!" the officer exclaimed, "my mother!" William Temple put it very simply: "When I pray for my friends coincidences happen to them. When I cease to pray, the coincidences cease."

I know all sorts of questions arise. Healing comes to one prayed for and not to another. One is protected from danger: another isn't. The only answer to these questions is that we do not know the answer. I have to say, "I don't know, and I don't think anybody else does." We pray believing that God does hear and answer. We pray believing that in doing so we are charging the environment of others with a spiritual energy that makes it easier for them to know and do God's will. We pray believing that we are creating new channels down which the power of God can flow into the situation. We pray believing that prayer can reach out over the miles, cross continents, penetrate barriers. Something happens to others! What happens is not in our control. How it happens is not for us to speculate about. Faith accepts the fact—and prays!

What happens when we pray for others? I answer, thirdly: Something happens with God. In our prayers of intercession we are cooperating with God, entering into partnership with God's purposes. We are not inducing God to interest himself in those for whom we pray, nudging him in their direction. No. We are proving to God that we are concerned about them and submitting our concern to him for purification and correction. More than that, we are actually uniting ourselves with the life of God unceasingly active for the salvation and welfare of men and women.

No wonder James says that such prayer has "Great power in effects" (James 5.16). Every time we pray it is as if we put into the hand of God an added instrument for the working out of his purpose. Something happens. Something happens in us. Something happens to others. Something happens with God.

At a Buddhist Retreat

OCTAVIO FELICIANO

During a day of fast and silent meditation, this writer learned a great deal about the hard realities of the spiritual life, as well as the joys of insight.

I am sitting under a huge oak tree having just killed God knows how many ants and insects purely by walking over and sitting here. I have also killed a thousand and one microscopic galaxies of beings I can't even conceive of. The single living thing which I cannot seem to kill is my hunger. I also have a pulsing headache due to my attachment to a strong desire for just one cup of fresh Puerto Rican coffee. I am sure everything would be conducive to enlightenment if I could have one cup of coffee.

Posture check: cross-legged. Back erect. Eyes almost permanently intersected as a result of so much time spent meditating. Any thoughts? I try to forget my headache which has been brought on by this twenty-four hour self-imposed fast. Fast and silence. I cannot even smoke my pipe. Nothing! Remember your breathing. Trying to meditate on emptiness, but holding my mind on blankness because if I let the 'monkey' roam around, as it wants to do, it will fly across oak trees, fields and cabins and into the nearest kitchen. I am hungry. Why am I here in upstate New York, at the Omega Institute? Why did I sign up for this five-day Tibetan Buddhist retreat? But more to the point: why did I have to meet the gentle Rinpoche as I was grouchily escaping to my cabin fully intending to nap through what is left of this one day of fast and silence?

"Where are you headed?" the Rinpoche asked.

I gestured vaguely in a direction which could be interpreted as both toward the meditation garden or toward the cabins.

"Good, sit under a tree somewhere and meditate for the next hours until we meet in the evening."

I almost cried. I couldn't look him in the eye. I had to follow his advice, what if he were the Buddha? I respected him because he had not abused the power which being leader of a retreat naturally confers. He didn't allow us to politely venerate him, which would have been the per-

Born and raised in Puerto Rico, Octavio Feliciano worked in the theatre for 10 years before writing his first novel, Workout. *He holds an M.F.A. from Columbia University and is currently studying for a doctorate.*

Tom Dunham

Tom Dunham

fect excuse for our not questioning ourselves, for not drilling deeper. Still, to be capable of generating love and compassion for every single human being, all that compassion and love which I had heard so much about during the first days of the retreat, I desperately needed to be alone, by myself, without one single human being near me.

So I marched past the dining hall, which smelled of freshly boiling miso, onion and celery soup, and beyond the garden where a group of people were slowly observing the flourishing sunflower plants. I searched until I found what seemed like the quietest field at Omega, a field where there was no one. I sat under an oak tree by a cabin. Given my thoughts, I was apprehensive about the future of my spiritual path. Did I really need a spiritual path? Really? Wouldn't a cup of coffee do? I had been told that generating motivation was the most important aspect of meditation so, being unable to talk myself into anything resembling motivation, I worried about the fact that at this point, enlightenment would have been a nice, warm bed, coffee or no coffee.

I am hungry and angry out of hunger. I have not had my morning cup of Cafe' El Pico. I accept those restrictions, but I doubt I can generate the meagrest drop of conditional love or the most manipulative of compassionate feelings towards those around me now. As a matter of fact, I rest secure in the knowledge that I won't generate anything resembling love as long as there are people around me.

If only I could be by myself, I think as I sit under the oak tree at Omega on a beautiful upstate New York afternoon, if only I didn't have to be exposed to people, then I could generate love for them. If only.

I find my peace and silence under that tree. But it is a peace like that of the living. It lasts two minutes. After I get into my lotus position, right before I get cramps in my left leg, just two minutes into my meditation the peace is torn. I hadn't noticed that my beautiful oak tree is right next to a cabin where another Omega class is being held. And that group gets into its coffee break right as I get into my lotus. The smell of coffee!

Now they surround me under the tree. I wish I could close my eyes completely; I am embarassed. They are here around me, a dozen of them, as if I didn't exist, as if I were a figment of their imaginations, as if they were meditating me. They continue the conversations they were having inside the classroom, but mercifully the coffee break lasts only ten long

minutes. Silence reigns again and I try to regain the composure I have yet to achieve.

Meditation is a way of strengthening the soul through the energizing breezes of gentleness for its encounter with the sublime hurricane of emptiness. There are safety locks which will not permit this encounter until one is prepared for it.

And I remember that I am sitting here because I was told to do so. All very disciplined and respectful. If the guide had allowed me to treat him as a venerable, honorable and exotic teacher, I could easily have gone to my cabin and given up, saying I could never achieve that level of evolution, that those who attain that level are either blessed, hard workers or just lucky. That is my lesson: the state of buddhahood is something within me which I can allow to unfold; it is not a dream about a theory.

As long as I call someone 'teacher' I stop thinking about him as a human being and place him in the category of 'sacred objects.' But if I call him by his name, I find myself with the responsibility to develop myself, to evolve, to aspire. After all, the example and the road are both in front of me.

I have come to this retreat looking for that most venerable part of myself: What I thought was my teacher. I was looking for a way out of salvation simply because I know my temperament rebels against it. I went looking for a guru who could develop his spiritual side in my stead as I repeated the pleasant enjoyment of going around in circles, around the chase of my tail, around, chasing nothing but the tail of my vale of tears. This Tibetan guy didn't fall for it. He knew about me before I did. I found in him someone who didn't let me call him "Teacher." I also saw that if I work NOW, in THIS life, with THIS nature, using all the imagination, goodwill and humor which human beings are capable of, if I work with patience and include myself in the "everyone," I can be one cool dude.

Some observations from ancient times hold true today: the earth, to my perception, is flat. The sky is a transparent blue dome. And so I am like a fish in a water tank. But I have the capacity to understand that nobody placed me here, that no one is looking. I have the capacity to know what is beyond the dome: by meditating I touch what is beyond because I am touched by what is inside. I connect myself with my greatest heritage.

That subtle moment of brightness I now take with me and renew it in my daily meditation practice. I present it as an offering for my own awakening and for the awakening of everybody else. Here is where I'm at.

Am I a Tibetan Buddhist? No I will always be a Puerto Rican Writer. But I have been enriched by contact with this person from Tibet. Today I sit, I write and drink my "café con leche" and this is where I'm at: I present my place in time as an offering for my own awakening, and for yours.

Until I become enlightened.

Emily Sargent Councilman

After Loss

What if
even this
diminishing circle
of earthly time-space
can open up
more sky
for me?

Can
make room
for enlarging
my circle of endless love
spreading its halo far
into limitless
light?

As Rivers Flow

When
centered within
the Living-Water-flow
of Life, Itself, I can
know my own
will come
to me,
and we are
never alone. All
rivers come home to the sea.

Poetry and Prayer

BERNETTA QUINN

"Contemplation brings joy, and so does poetry." For both poetry and prayer entail a broad vision of reality and deep penetration into the truth. According to this writer, who is herself a poet and a contemplative, poetry and prayer are similar for many reasons, particularly because both issue in praise.

The poet is someone who is truly aware, sometimes of things to come ("Poets are the antennae of the race," says Ezra Pound), more often of things as they are, and even more importantly of "the world within the world" (Paul Eluard).

A poet is also a seer (a see-er into reality). Awareness, really seeing, results in praise. Prayer, the lifting up of one's consciousness to God, is, at least in hours of consolation, just that: praise. In "The Gift," William Carlos Williams says "All men by their nature give praise." Poets do so by their craft, as Saint Francis did when he composed one of the first poems in Europe in the vernacular, "The Canticle of the Sun" with its images leading from creation to the Creator. Gerard Manley Hopkins, especially in "The Starlight Night" ("O look at all the firefolk sitting in the air!) exemplifies this natural flowing forth of praise, so closely connected with thanksgiving and adoration. "Praise Him," "Pied Beauty" ends.

A poet-retreatant went for a walk on a fine April afternoon near a retreat center and collected material for written praise: the rat-a-tat-tat of woodpeckers drilling, a single dogwood presenting its white surprise in a recessed area of woodland, shadows cobwebbing the grey country road, beetles whirring their cheerful dialogues, pea-green lichen embossing the dingy oak trunks, the wet-shiny gold of buttercups next to a formal bed of scarlet and canary-yellow tulips. The poet notices how the very newest pine cones are each pale green and almond-shaped, like a finger nail, and how the "old age" of dandelion puffs rises on slim stems over the stubby grass. Thoughts of divine love as expressed through Nature come easily.

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There is a poet alive in the unconscious of every individual and each person has a story. Ladislaus Boros calls this story all-important: "If we accept our everyday lives as the basis of the eternity that is within us, we shall sooner or later observe that even the least significant things have infinite depth and are heralds of that eternity." Tad Dunne, S.J., comes to the same insight in *We Cannot Find Words: The Foundations of Prayer:* "Explicit prayer is the bringing into the open before God whatever movements, crises, agreements, and yearnings happen to make up the slice of history that we each call our story."

For Wallace Stevens, the poet's subject is his or her "sense of the world": "Art," he says in an early journal entry, "sets out to express the human soul" (*Souvenirs and Prophecies*, ed. Holly Stevens). Isaiah and the Psalms are full of symbolic landscapes, usually animated in a highly imaginative way: "Mountains and hills will break into joyful cries before you/ and all the trees of the countryside clap their hands" (Isaiah 55.12).

In prayer and poetry the mind reaches out for comparisons that touch the senses: visually, these contribute to what Auden defined as "memorable speech." In addition, the music of a poem achieved through refrain, rhyme, repetition, accent patterns, enables the reader to remember its words. After all, the poem is first of all speech, and therefore meant for

the ear, as Hopkins underscores when he devises a whole code of rules for his sprung rhythm, which when followed in oral reading releases the actual meanings of his work.

On the highest level "memorable speech" is represented by Dylan Thomas's poem for his dying father, "Do Not Go Gentle into That Goodnight." Hopkins' "God's Grandeur" is a maturely developed sonnet that employs among other devices the juxtaposition of strong beats ("shook foil," "Over the bent world," "deep down things") to achieve unforgettable passages.

A poem is a "made" thing, not the spontaneous warbling of woodland voices wild that some Romantic theorists prefer to believe it. In "A High-toned Old Christian Woman" Wallace Stevens equates poetry with fiction, a noun which derives from the Latin word for "to make, form, shape": "Poetry is the supreme fiction, madame."

Perhaps the best definition of poetry is that by Gerard Manley Hopkins: "speech for contemplation." Constructed out of speech, with an implied addressee, a poem is intended not for quick use and then discarding, as with a newspaper, but for cherishing, marveling at all its beauties, in the way a fiancee might a rose given her by her beloved: studying sepals, petals, stem, color, texture, fragrance. It can be returned to again and again with joy.

This contemplation is easier to see in the spatial art of painting, though poetry becomes spatial rather than temporal as the reader experiences it repeatedly. A great poem is truly an incarnation: "Beauty is momentary in the mind,/ But in the flesh it is immortal" (Wallace Stevens in "Peter Quince at the Clavier"). Once the themes take on the flesh, become sensuous, they are as lasting as that lyric's narration of Susannah and the elders, which Stevens and the Book of Daniel turn into "a sacrament of praise."

Contemplation brings joy, and so does poetry: "Jacques Maritain has called the latter "the heaven of the working reason" (*Art and Scholasticism*, '80). Symbols offer a means to reach the invisible (a symbol is that which a thing is—a rose is a rose—but something else too: a rose can be love, Ireland, war, Paradise itself as in Dante). When William Blake writes "to see the world in a grain of sand," he is speaking in symbol, as Katherine Tynan is in the lyric "All on an April Evening": "I passed the sheep on the roadside,/ And thought on the lamb of God."

"In the beginning was the Word." In the word, today and all days, we find grace, light, peace, a lifting up of heart along the pilgrim's way.

Giving Leads to Giving

TARA GRABOWSKY

For the past six years since junior high school I have spent part of each summer vacation working in Appalachia or in the inner city of Trenton, NJ. I learned a lot in both places and in many different ways but nothing more important than that *giving leads to giving*.

Dave Martosko

I have been working with Martin House in Trenton for six years. Martin House rebuilds ruined and abandoned houses for homeless people. Our volunteer group consisted primarily of girls from my high school. We insulated, sheet rocked, panelled, trimmed, laid floors, sanded, and painted.

The foreman there, whom I will call Mr. F., was a professional construction worker. It became evident our first day there that Mr. F. did not want our help. We were puzzled and somewhat frustrated by his attitude to us, but we kept on working. The first year I worked in the Program he avoided us whenever he could. When he eventually started inspecting our work, he only criticized it—and us. It got to the point that when he pulled up in front of the house that we were rebuilding and his distinctive drawl boomed up the stairs, we literally became frantic. We would do everything possible to make our work flawless, but we knew that nothing would ever satisfy Mr. F. We soon realized that he resented our presence in Trenton. After all, we had come from a private girl's school, how could we possibly understand the poverty of Trenton?

Mr. F.'s resentment went on for three long summers. One day in my fourth year with Martin House, Mr. F.'s van pulled up, his voice thundered up the stairs, and we all became tense as usual. We braced for the onslaught of his criticism, but this time as he examined the sheet rock we

Tara Grabowsky is the daughter of FiP *Editor, Mary Ford-Grabowsky. She has just completed her freshman year at Dartmouth College where she performs with the Dodecaphonics, a group of 12 men and women who sing a cappella. Tara is planning a career in the biological sciences.*

had just put up on a ceiling, his grumble gave way to a smile and he said, "You know, you girls do good work!"

I think that our output and the quality of our work doubled from that day on. Mr. F. was no longer intimidating. And much to our amazement, at the end of the summer he even gave us a party! As he sliced two watermelons into huge servings for the 12 of us, he said in an embarrassed tone, "You kids are terrific! I don't know what we would do without you. I can't remember how we survived before you came here."

Mr. F. had learned to disregard our background and to simply appreciate our work. We had started out by giving some time and labor to the homeless people of Trenton, but by the end of that summer, the giving had affected more than the prospective homeowners. Both our volunteer group and Mr. F. received unexpected gifts: we learned that our work was valued, and Mr. F. learned that he could trust us—and maybe even like us.

In Appalachia a group of volunteers, mainly girls from my high school, worked for several years on weatherizing homes for the poor. One summer, my group was digging a drainage ditch behind a house to prevent further water damage. The owner of the house, Mrs. Watson, was a woman whose husband had recently died, and she was very lonely. We soon discovered that we were helping her not so much because her home was falling apart but because she desperately needed company. Our presence gave her joy. Everyday she cooked us lunch, although she certainly could not afford to. When we had only been a few days on the job, she began to tell us how much we meant to her and that she would like to adopt us all. By Wednesday of the week we were to spend with her, Mrs. Watson suddenly laid all the jewelry that she owned on her rickety kitchen table and told each of us to take a piece. She pointed to one particular necklace and told us that she had never taken it off until that day. Her daughter had given it to her six years before.

I accepted a chain, and I have not taken it off since that Wednesday in 1988, and I don't think I will for a very long time to come. For me it symbolizes Appalachia Service Project's accomplishments: families gain hope, living conditions are improved, and lasting friendships are formed.

I will give you one last example of the way in which giving brings about giving. A few summers ago I went with a friend, Liliana, to North Carolina, once again to build houses for the poor. Liliana has back problems that are easily aggravated and knew that a week of sleeping on a tile

floor in an abandoned school house would be painful. So she brought an air mattress with her. After only one day, though, the mattress popped. Between sleeping on a hard floor and undergoing the rigors of repairing a rotted trailer frame, Liliana soon developed back spasms. That night she rested for only a few hours and the condition became more and more painful. The next day one of our leaders, Mark, went to the local store and bought Liliana a new mattress. He didn't spend much money but he gave her an invaluable gift, and he wanted nothing in return.

Liliana was deeply touched. She told Mark that she didn't really know how to thank him. "The best way to thank me," Mark responded, "is to do the same for someone else." He went on to say that he had found that small acts of caring mean a lot, and he hoped that everyone who received one of his gifts would turn around and do the same for someone else.

Liliana did in fact do the same for someone else, thus continuing the giving that Mark had begun. Ann, a friend of ours at school, was going to have surgery, and the day before the operation, Liliana left a red carnation in Ann's locker. It was a small token but it meant a great deal, just as Mark's mattress had to Liliana.

Perhaps then, giving can be thought of as a pebble thrown in an almost limitless lake. The pebble creates ripple after ripple until the lake is filled. My experience as a volunteer has taught me that one gift leads to another in just the same way.

FiP is a beautiful publication. From concept to execution, it is a joy.
Mary Dittbrenner; Chicago, IL

Our church has a Universal Worship Service based on the Sufi tradition once a month. We found a treasure in *FiP* as a source of sermonettes and readings. It is a jewel and most appropriate for our ecumenical focus—a source of "Light."
Helen S. Selleck; Old Lyme, CT

My husband and I do appreciate receiving *FiP*. He used "Angela's Parables" as a retreat meditation for Episcopal deanery clergy several months ago at St. Gregory's Abbey, and they loved it!
Harriet Smith Hostetler; Three Rivers, MI

I don't know whether you're married or single, would prefer to be addressed as Miss, Ms., or Mrs., but your Editor's Introduction and the choices of articles for *FiP* have made me feel that in you I have a friend that I can address without hesitation by your first name.

I want to thank you and the Ruth Lilly Fund for *FiP*. It is one of the very few publications I have ever received that I continue to look forward to each issue. How often when it comes I find some article or item that seems to have been included *JUST FOR ME!* I frequently am called upon to give talks to groups of 20 to 50, and usually like to talk on prayer, its effects in my life, and means of deepening a prayerful life. I find *FiP* a most appreciated "pass out." Thank you!
Michael McCartney; Toledo, OH

What a marvelous discovery—while at a weekend workshop at Spiritual Life Center, Narragansett, RI—to find *FiP* for spiritual reading! Format, content, variety, photos, poetry, etc., appeal to me. Thus I'm subscribing to your publication, anticipating many pleasurable, insightful hours of reading and reflection. Continued blessings on your "project," and on each person associated with *F.i.P.*
Noreen Twomey; Jersey City, NJ

Thank you for your *inspiring* contemplative journal!
P. A. Knecht; Mentone, CA

Thank you for making it possible for those of us who can't pay to receive your blessed magazine.
Name Withheld; Scranton, PA

To all at F.i.P., I thank you for the *breadth* of your coverage. I recently saw a copy of your publication and am entering a personal subscription. I am impressed with the depth and breadth of the articles.

I am a Director of a program for homeless persons. We are an inter-faith ministry, and your publication is the first I have seen that is not aimed at just one faith but in fact speaks to persons of any faith. I also appreciate the fact that there seems to be no attempt to proselytize for any particular faith.
Dr. Stuart E. Whitney; Restart; Kansas City, MO

I hope the true universality and expressions of infinite Oneness continue to be expressed in your journal. In love and gratitude,
John Miller; Portland, OR

For six months of the year we live on an island in a lake in Northern Minnesota. *FiP* helps us to remember we are also a part of "the main"—a community, very real though unseen, devoted to personal growth and a deeper spirit of fellowship among human beings everywhere. Thank you!
Kathryn E. Doty; Grand Rapids, MN

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